"The Comedy of Eros"

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Scene 1:

Prologue:

Oh for a muse of hot air
To thaw the frozen vine of disbelief
So that its fruits may be properly suspended.

Let our windy exposition blow down
Those walls that would have you see here
No more than a stage fringed with actors.

Instead of a theatre with seats,
A duchedom for a stage.

Instead of this beggars verse
So owing in sense as to be at a deficit,
Hear in its place rich prose,
Marked not in red, but rather purple
And lacking in wit what it makes up for in brevity.

Pardon gentle auditors our syntax,
And kindly look upon our account.
Extend to us the credit of your patience
And earn by way of interest a tale best quickly told.

Our players' gusty words unfurl the cloth of our tale
on a beach in Italy, where an Apothecary, one Testicles,
gathers the makings of Elixirs and remedies.

Scene 1: A seaside beach.

Testicles:
Forsooth,
The morning's calm has quelled the ire of the nights tempest!
And for an apothecary tis a treasure trove of cockles and barnacles
Useful to no end in the preparation of medicinal mixtures.

Behold the scarce and seldom seen Tunisian Goat's Wort,
Not efficacious of itself,
But prized for the delightful jaundice
It imparts to many a pallid potion.

And here we find the bud of Elsinore,
Reputed to have driven the
Prince of Denmark mad – or not - or did it?

What flotsam and jetsom are these?
Mayhaps tis a tangle of opiated kelp.

(Touches one of them.)

Warm o' my troth.
If kelp this be, tis no such kelp as I have seen.

(Rolls them over.)

Tis a pair of soggy wash-ups,
Alas, but for their faces they are completely kelpless

(Cilantro coughs.)

There is life left in them yet,
And a waking essence should increase its store.

(He rummages in his bag, produces a small vial and waves it beneath both their noses. They both cough and come round quickly fanning at their noses, their eyes still covered by kelp.)

Cilantro:
The devil's own snot has made my nose its house!

Coriander:
What nostrillous pestilence is this?

Testicles:
Rest easy young friends, tis only an arousing perfume.

Cilantro:
Do people in these parts smell this way when they are aroused?

(Looks disapprovingly at Cilantro. Testicles removes the kelp from Cilantro's eyes.)

Testicles:
What doppelgangery is this?
Two forms and one face between them.
Were't not for their identical features side by side,
I should think them one.

Coriander: (Gesturing to the vial of smelling salts in his hand.)
Are you an apothecary sir?

Testicles:
Testicles the Apothecary at your service. Who are you two, who seem as one?

(Coriander and Cilantro glance at one another.)

Coriander:
My name is ... Viola.

Cilantro:
And I am ... Sebastian.

Testicles:
Dear friends, the monstrous fiction of your nomenclature is transparent.
Viola? Sebastian? What hackneyed scenario did those come from?
If in false guises you are to parade,
Your names must o'er step the façade (fuh-sade) er ... façade (fuh-sawd).

(Coriander and Cilantro look at each other and nod.)

Coriander:
Testicles, your sack is a full one - this to us would vouchsafe your industry.

Cilantro
And what man is industrious who is not also trustworthy?

Testicles:
A slippery line of logicking at best but pray continue.

Cilantro:
Our true names are these – I am Cilantro.

Coriander:
And I am Coriander.

Testicles:
The Duke of Muscany's twin children?

Cilantro:
Two and the same.

Testicles:
Your names are known widely on this narrow coast.

Coriander:
Know then that since my girlhood
I have been indentured in marriage
To the cheese merchant, Asiago.
That sunken ship now gravely resting
Was to take me to our wedding.

Testicles:
I have heard of Asiago.
He is said not to know curds from whey,
Nor his right hand from his left.

Cilantro:
Indeed, his moldy fortune was ruined
By his lack of culture,
When he mistook the wheel of a dung cart
For a wheel of cheddar
And sent it to the King of Illyria.

Testicles:
Tell me why, when
Asiago's fortunes have gone so rancid,
Does your father still give tooth to the indenture?

Cilantro:
Our father is a man of honour.

Coriander:
Forsooth, I could forgive Asiago his misfortune,
But more to the worse,
I fear he will prove a foul bombard,
Loud of mouth and rude of wit.

Testicles:
You have not met him?

Coriander:
Nay! And while I have no wish to bring
Dishonour on our family, I cannot help but labour
Under the conception that this union may be to
A blustering fool, whose pillow talk
Will be the sport of self inflation.

Testicles:
So the bellowing gale,
That has drowned your ship,
May be more windfall than misfortune.

Coriander:
So I see it.

Testicles:
And what of you young Cilantro?
What is your part in this misadventure?

Cilantro:
Though in full sympathy with my sister's plight,
I was duty bound to accompany her as our family's emissary.

Testicles:
And what now?
Cilantro:  
Truth be known, I have no wish to return to court.  
E'er since our venerable sire found Asiago's fortunes gone bad,  
He has sounded a tally-ho amongst the nobles of Europe.  
Now their daughters chase me as hounds after a fox,  
Wooing me with their foreign tongues.

Testicles:  
Many young men of my acquaintance  
Would come to enjoy wooing  
By foxy foreign tongues.

Cilantro:  
Alas their tongues are shapr.  
And 'tis I who get licked.

Testicles:  
And so the both of you  
Have good reason to counterfeit your guises,  
Since discovery would force a return  
To that fold you both so hate.

Coriander:  
How would you advise us sir?

Testicles:  
You are well known in these parts and  
Your instinct to disguise was right,  
Though ineptly done.  
Why not employ that symmetry of feature  
That nature has twinned you with?

(Coriander and Cilantro look at each other.)

Cilantro:  
I do not follow.

Coriander:  
Nor I.

Testicles:  
Make a mockery of your sexes  
And become sister and brother  
Who are really brother and sister.

Coriander:  
If, as you say, we are of one face and two bodies  
Then so disguised should simply seem to be ourselves.  
If we are so well known hereabouts as you would have us,  
Tis surely an empty tactic.

Testicles:  
Your observation is accurate,  
Though not dramatically constructive.
I entreat you - acquiesce to one
Who has made his bread strutting and fretting over
Many a fakement.

(Coriander and Cilantro look at each other.)

Coriander & Cilantro:
Very well.

Testicles:
Very well! First we affect the switch.

(He switches their hats and puts Cilantro's moustache on Coriander, then steps back to look at his
handiwork.)

Testicles:
Forsooth, 'tis nearly impossible to tell a switch has been made.

Cilantro:
But I still don't see –

Coriander: (Cutting him off.)
The windows of his mind are clearly
Blocked by Bard devices.

Testicles:
And now to settle on names.
Let us not pick anything so illustriously
Improbable as Viola and Sebastian.
Rather, be you a pair of Spaniards,
The courtly brother, Habanero, and his
Sweet, if peppery sister, Cubanelle.

Cilantro:
Er – what would you have us do now sir?

Testicles:
In town you will see no church for we are Hamlet.
Where the church would stand, were we not a Hamlet,
Is the nunnery. Get thee past the nunnery,
Tarry not with the Gravediggers, but seek instead
The castle of one Lothargio, where the wood begins.
Lothargio is a lazy noble, popular with the ladies,
But still unmarried.
He is not very observant, so simply tell him I have sent you
To inquire after food and lodgings for yourself
And you will surely receive kind treatment.

Coriander:
Thank you Testicles.
Your acquaintance again we hope to make.

Cilantro:
We trust you'll keep our secret safe.
Scene 2:

(Credenza stands nearby with writing tray.)

(Credenza enters with letter.)

Credenza:
A letter for you Lord Lothargio.

Lothargio:
If misery be the food of love,
Then I must be the food of love itself
Too often eaten and now tired of mastication.

I have grown weary of being stalked
By these ... cougar, whose prey is not
My person so much as the gratification that ... part of it can supply.

Admittedly I once thought that being devoured weekly,
By supple huntresses sleekly skinned
And lissome legged though strong of limb,
Was all that any man would need.

But even oversexed dukes need to feel special once in a while
And when I met the lady Rosacea she was a cougar for sure,
Though one whose appetites seemed tempered with affection.

A cougar who might appreciate my boyish lethargy
Instead of mistaking an absence of action for an absence of interest.
Alas as is the nature of her kind, she has become impatient,
And by the nature of my kind, I am saddened by my impending loss
But unwilling to change my ways.

Credenza:
Shall I open the friggin' letter or not?

Lothargio:
Fore you break the seal,
Best you know your first fortnight
In my service has been most excellent, Credenza.

(Credenza seems puzzled.)

Credenza:
Are you saying
That my ... work in the last .... two weeks has been good?

Lothargio:
Your speech is too shallow
to fathom its meaning.
Credenza:
Uhh ... Is it your ... import ... that my... servitude has been a ... plenitude of ... want-less-ness?

Lothargio:
Forsooth, the contrary is true.
You have a singular genius for
Mixing up the simplest opposites.
Your comedic blundering hath amused me,
During my ill fated courtship of Lady Rosacea.

Credenza:
I uh... thank ... you ... thee ... I thank thee.

Lothargio:
Now break the seal, good Credenza.

(Credenza breaks the seal, opens the letter and holds it there for him to inspect.)

Lothargio:
Though I am too lazy to read 't myself,
The slant of the script foreshadows heartbreak.
I fear Lady Rosacea's foresakement of me in quest
Of a paramour not so enslaved by interia.
Read it, Credenza.

Credenza: (Reading:)

Not so Dear Lothargio,
As I prick this virgin sheet
With a nib dulled by long o'er use,
I cannot help but think of our last tryst together.
I wished you to visit your passions on me here at my castle.
You replied the trip was too long,
As you were tired from ardent sleeping.
Every time we two have trysted
Twas I who came to you.
And though I know your resolve to be stiff and enduring,
Your unrepentant sluggishness has dimmed my affections.
Please regard this missive
As a termination of that understanding.
I had hoped you and I might share.

Lothargio:
Alas Credenza,
My cursed unwillingness
To stir my lazy bone - bones has cost me another
Goodly Lady.

Credenza:
Tis indeed a ... tragic .... flaw my lord.

Lothargio:
I must overcome this
Handicap if I am to find true happiness.
But ho! There is a fragment of script on the other side.

(Credenza flips the letter over and reads.)

Credenza:
Post Script -
Lest you be too lazy to have this missive read to you,
I shall call at noon to render certain your understanding.

Lothargio:
Ha! The Lady's impatience
Has not left her I see.

(Bell rings.)

Lothargio:
And there she is now.

(Rosacea enters.)

Lothargio:
How now, Rosacea?

Rosacea:
Lothargio.

Lothargio:
I hear my noble sloth hath dulled your passion.

Rosacea:
If sloths were nobles you should be a two-toed king.

Lothargio: (sarcastically)
O, thou hast pierced me with thine rapier wit!

Rosacea:
Too lazy even to frame a glib rebuttal.

Lothargio: (rolls over on his chair and drapes his cape over this butt.)
My buttal is framed as glibly as any.

Rosacea:
I am surprised it is not more misshapen from sitting on your ass.

Lothargio:
My ass is a patient fellow,
Which is more than I can say
For those who are always riding it!

Rosacea:
If I ride your ass, 'tis 'cause my patience has thrown me off!

Lothargio:
Your patience is a bucking, untamed, mare.

Rosacea:
Retract your slander so quickly you never spoke it!

(Bell rings.)

Lothargio:
Perhaps I shall - if you are patient.

(Bell rings.)

Rosacea:
Do you leave the door unanswered?

Lothargio:
My laziness commands the door be left unanswered

(Bell rings.)

Rosacea:
Will you not send Credenza to answer it?

Lothargio:
For someone as lazy as I, the telling of the task is too tiring.

(Bell rings.)

Rosacea: (Screams.)
Ahhhhhh.

(Habanero and Cubanelle tumble burst into the room, winding up between Lothargio and Rosacea. Each speaks in their normal voice.)

Habanero:
We heard voices raised.

Cubanelle:
And then a scream.

Habanero: (lower "his" voice)
I mean, "We heard voices raised."

Cubanelle: (raising "her" voice)
And then a scream.

Lothargio looks at Cubanelle his, eyes slightly glazed.
Rosacea regards Habanero coyly.
Under their disguises:
Coriander looks at Lothargio with interest.
Cilantro regards Rosacea with evident appetite.

(Lothargio breaks the spell first and rises for the first time, going over to Cubanelle. Rosacea is shocked and annoyed, giving Lothargio a look, but then sees Habanero.)
Lothargio:  
Good lady, prithee tell me thy name.

(Kisses "Cubanelle's" hand.)

Cubanelle:  
Cubanelle, milord.

(Cilantro cranes to regain his view of Rosacea, who curtsies with her arms spread then proceeds toward Habanero.)

Rosacea:  
And by what title may I honour you sir?

Habanero: (stutteringly)  
Habanero.

(Coriander tries to regain her view of Lothargio.)

Cubanelle:  
An apothecary, one Testicles,  
Counselled us we might find food and lodging here.

Lothargio:  
Friends of Testicles?  
Then you are welcome.  
We were about to feast on succulent meats.

Habanero:  
But care you not about who we are?

Cubanelle:  
Nor where we come from?

Rosacea: (stepping closer)  
Who are you?

Lothargio: (stepping closer)  
Where do you come from?

(Shying away from Lothargio's advances, the "Cubanelle" shrinks away.)

Cubanelle:  
Alas, I have come over all faint.

Habanero:  
Perhaps my sister and I had best retire to the garden so she can find her breath again.

(Exeunt Cubanelle & Habanero.)

Lothargio: (Calling after them.)  
The bell will ring when lunch is nigh.  
(To Rosacea.)
Well Rosacea, the household must prepare for lunch,  
So I will trouble you to be on your way.

Rosacea:  
But I must to stay!

Lothargio:  
In fact, you must away.

Rosacea:  
If your purpose is to sabotage my designs on the desirable Habanero,  
Then rest assured I shall do my utmost  
To thwart that interest you so obviously take in his sister.

(Pushes her out.)

Lothargio:  
Don't ride your ass too hard on the way home.

(Exit Rosacea.)

Lothargio:  
Credenza, prepare for lunch.

(Exit Lothargio.)

Credenza:  
I'd never have taken this job if I'd known their talk would be like this -
I understand so little, I can't even ask them to repeat what I've missed.

(Exits.)

Scene 3:

Lothargio's Garden:

(Coriander & Cilantro enter and remove their hats to be themselves for a moment.)

Cilantro: Methinks our ruse hath fooled Lothargio and Rosacea.

Coriander:  
Lord Lothargio did stand quickly erect  
When met he the fair Senorita Cubanelle.

Cilantro:  
And the Lady Rosacea did spread her limbs wide,  
'Pon meeting the dashing Habanero.

Coriander:  
And what of you dear brother?  
I thought I saw the light of desire
Behind Cubanelle's eyes when she did look upon Lady Rosacea.

Cilantro:
Her endowments stack well in her favour.

Coriander:
And Lord Lothargio is an appealing package, ripe for the unwrapping.

Cilantro:
Since incognito we appear as ourselves
Tis plain to see that you are the one who hath
Snared Lothargio's heart.

Coriander:
As you are the heart that Rosacea wishes to ensnare.

Cilantro:
Dare we conduct our courtship of these two
In our own guises?

Coriander:
Tis an obvious imprudence, brother.
For if our true selves be known,
Lord Lothargio perforce must turn us in.

Cilantro:
You speak wisely.

Coriander:
Do not forget that we have only just made their acquaintance.
Shiny now to look upon, once better known to us they may lose their lustre.
Instead let us advantage ourselves of the supposed likeness of our likenesses
And observe the affection paid to our second person by a third while the first looks on.

Cilantro:
So you and I will be audience, each to the other's player?

Coriander:
The better to judge our suitors' suitability.

Cilantro:
But what if we should find their suits to be garish and not to our liking?

Coriander:
Let us seek 'Testicles' counsel once again.

(Exeunt.)

Scene 4:
Lothargio's Court

(Credenza scrubs the floor, musing to herself. Rosacea pokes her head round the corner.)

Credenza:
I fear my days in service here are numbered. These courtiers speak in a fashion most unusual. Their purple verse is blank to me, though fraught with meaning in their exchanges with each other. These chores are to me as separating curds from whey, though simple as this work is, they think me simpler still as I am slow to grasp their... udders... ugh... utterances. If only this one-horse town had one not hoarse from spewing bull! I'd look kindly 'pon a simple man who could squeeze the virgin meaning from my speech.

Rosacea:
Pssst!

Credenza (in surprise):
Lady Rosacea!

Rosacea:
Credenza, because Lothargio hath banished me
From lunch, tis imperative I have eyes and ears
Within these walls to better make my play for the gallant Habanero.

Credenza:
I really can't.

Rosacea:
Oh Credenza, please help me.
I have reached that hour in life
When the wanting of a companion
Seems clear and lasting as the peal of a bell.

Oh, mistake me not,
I have tumbled joyfully and generously with
Many a man of Lordly stock, but I have always
Known those times would not last.

Now I wish truly,
To find one who at least promises the possibility of
Of love longer than a fortnight.

I swear to you Credenza, the moment I saw Habanero
My eyes showed me one I might friendship as well as in courtship.
Help me, Credenza, you're my only hope.

Credenza:
But, I mean, alas if Lothargio finds out about my, learns of my... duplicity... he will sack me.

Rosacea:
Would a smattering of gold allay your fears?

Credenza: (Not entirely sure what Rosacea means, but interested.)
May be.
Rosacea crosses to Credenza and begins to pour coins out of a small sack. Showing unaccustomed quick wit, Credenza catches the coins in her apron.

Rosacea:
Then let this tinkling golden shower purchase your fealty as my peon.

Credenza: (Wincs and then tries to come up with something appropriate.)
Indeed lady, I shall ... be to you ... as a ... gardener, who ... keeps ... his Lady's ... bush ... in trim.

Rosacea:
Well said.
Discover then what Senor Habanero likes
And what his sister dislikes.
His likes so that I may better woo him
And her dislikes so that I may use them
To stymie Lothargio's advances.

Lothargio: (offstage)
Credenza!

Rosacea:
Tis Lothargio.
I must needs beat a hasty retreat!

(Rosacea Exits.)

(Lothargio Enters.)

Lothargio:
Credenza, though I know your mind
To be scattered as feathers from a pillow,
You are the only servant I have.
In accordance with this (and because I'm lazy),
I must entrust you with the task
Of discovering Senorita Cubanelle's pleasures.

Credenza:
You wish to pleasure her, my lord?

Lothargio:
Oh would that it were so Credenza ... would that it were so.
So that I may better win her favour, let's call it that.
At the same time
I would have you pry loose her brother's dislikes
So that I can poison Rosacea's chances with him.
As a small token of my faith in thee,
Allow me to present you with this pearl necklace.
What say you?

Credenza:
Indeed lord I shall... give you the fullest ... oral ... report of any careless ...tongue I may receive.

Lothargio:
Most excellent.
And now I must away to rest up for my nap.

(Lothargio Exits.)

Credenza:
Doubly entrusted I am, and with fright,
Now if only I could tell left from right.

Scene 5:

Testicles apothecary shop.

(Testicles mixes potions and powders as he addresses the audience.)

Testicles:
Knaves and yeomen
Would have one think that apothecaries
Are fancy spoken birds, whose words form
Great ostrich plumes of verbiage and bluster.
In truth we are plain spoken fellows
Closer in feather to the sombre crow
Than the gaseous peacock.

And to carry this avian metaphor
Through to its proper hatching,
Many a lady who's bedded an apothecary
Will tell you that although the cock may crow
When tis time to crow, once the hour for crowing has grown soft,
The cock will coo softly as a pair of nesting tits.

Alas, Ladies birds are not this hunter's quarry.
Gentlemen and boys, this hunter prefers the company of bulls.
Indeed, I am not merely an apothecary,
I am an homeopath.

But therein lies the problem,
The other homeopaths in this
Wayward seaside town,
Are not plain spoken
Like the bull or the crow.
They are twittering chickadees,
Paired off with each other
So that their types
Are visible in stereo
From the Church
To the Wells.
And sly though they may be in their
Lisping sybilants,
This catty banter holds little allure for
A bull loving bird such as myself.

(Knock. Cilantro pokes his head around the corner.)

Cilantro:
Testicles, my sister and I are without.
Is your shop clear of onlookers?

Testicles:
Enter young friends.

(Cilantro and Coriander enter, in their own guises.)

Testicles:
Has your ruse been thus far successful?
How did Lothargio receive you?

Coriander:
All has worked as you said it would, Testicles.
But the lie of the land has changed a little.

Cilantro:
Indeed, we met not only the Lord Lothargio,
But also his former love, the Lady Rosacea.

Coriander:
As ourselves, each is drawn to that noble opposite of our sex,
But the nobles are smitten with our incognito selves,
In reality, he or she, of the same sex, as they.

Cilantro:
And though we are sure their affections should stay constant if we reveal ourselves,
Also do we fear that they may tell our true identities and so betray us.

Testicles:
A pretty problem indeed, but one easily solved by a rudimentary love potion.

Cilantro: (looks uneasily at Coriander)
Forsooth sister, this fellow's stratagems are outlandish.
Tis as if the sturdy phalanx of his reason,
Has dwindled to a single shaking spear.

Coriander:
T'were more like a falling staff from where I stand,
But let us hear him out. He has not steered us wrong yet.

Testicles:
I shall mix for you a love potion,
Which once drunk by you
Will cause the first person who sets eyes on you
To be smitten by your many perfections.

(The twins look at each other.)

Testicles:
Once the nobles are enamoured of you so,
They will not have the cruel hearts to turn you in.
But since you are siblings be careful in your dosing.
One of my younger brothers accidentally gave a potion such as this
To my eldest brother and sister. The results can scarcely be described as pretty.

(Pause.)

Testicles:
Well aren't you going to ask me what that younger brother's name was?

Cilantro:
What was that younger brother's name?

Testicles:
Incesticles. After that we sent him to live with my uncle who had survived nineteen fires.

(Another pause.)

Coriander:
Whose name was?

Testicles
Asbestocles. And finally we pawned Incesticles off on a gullible cousin called Easilyimpressedicles.

Coriander:
Whose idea was that?

Testicles:
Father knows besticles.

Cilantro:
Enough of these ecclesiastical witticisms. We must be on our way.

Coriander:
Will you send the potion once tis done?

Testicles:
You shall have it before the end of the day.

(Coriander and Cilantro Exeunt.)
Testicles: If only one of my potions could cure that heartache I have described that so pains me. I fear my lonesome dove routine will prove a hit with the fates and its run will be a long one.

(Credenza pokes her head in.)

Credenza:
Are you Testicles?

Testicles:
At your service madam.

Credenza:
(aside)
Here's a chap who understands me when I speak normally.
And good looking too in a pharmacological kind of way.
Perhaps he is just such a one as I have been looking for.

Credenza:
Testicles, your name conjures to mind visions of fabulous balls.

Testicles:
I've not been balled so often as I'd like.

Credenza:
Most men are pleased not to go balled.

Testicles: (aside)
Here is a venerable dame whose manner of speech is so plain that were she a man I might make her bull, but alas she is woman.

Testicles: (to Credenza)
Was there some purpose in your visit, Mistress?

Credenza:
I have come from Lord Lothargio's.
He has bidden me procure him a love potion.

Testicles:
He sent word beforehand.
You must be his maidservant Credenza.

Credenza: (she's looking for something clever to say)
I am his maidservant yes,
Because I am his servant and that is what he has made me.

Testicles: (aside)
By Harry, this woman's lack of artifice is painful.
Were she a man I'd find it fetching,
But as she's a woman I find her wit wanting quickness,
And herself sadly wanting me.

Testicles:
Alas poor Credenza, I know thee well. You are destined for disappointment.
Credenza: The potion is not ready?

Testicles:
Nay, I have your master's potion ready here.
Once tis taken the drinker will fall in love with the first person they see.
And since you are returning to the castle
Would'st thou be so good as to deliver this other potion
To Cubanelle and Habanero?
Best keep them both out of sight,
And as thy name is Credenza,
I suggest concealing the potions in your drawers.

(Credenza does so.)

Testicles:
But on no account are you to mix them up.

(Credenza looks nervous.)

Testicles:
And now if you will excuse me,
I have some lardy ointments to mix.

Credenza:(aside)
My advances rebuffed with scarcely a shine from him.
This and the surety that I shall confuse the potions make me nervous.

(Exits.)

Testicles:
That woman's eyes are not with comprehension bright;
Cubanelle and Habanero shall my help require tonight.

Scene 6;
Lothargio's garden.

(Credenza enters carrying a love potion in each hand.)

Credenza:
My ... deficit of ... language
And these ridiculous... two-headed plots
Are whittling away the stick of my interest.
Its diminished length could see Lothargio
Bed Habanero and Rosacea bed Cubanelle,
For all the point it would come to.
But for the least I can do,
I think I have given up on trying.

(Habanero and Cubanelle enter.)

Credenza:
Ah... er... Jalapeno and Chipotle isn't it?
Cubanelle:
That's Habanero and Cubanelle.

Credenza:
Right ... well look ... that nice Testicles has given me your love potion.

(She looks at the two vials hopelessly, switches them back & forth in her hands several times before hiding both behind her back with an air of resignation.)

Credenza:
It's in one of my hands. Pick.

(Habanero picks one of Credenza's hands and she gives him the vial.)

Credenza:
Well chosen – that's definitely yours.

Habanero:
A thousand thanks Good Credenza.
We are in your debt.

Cubanelle:
Instead of us being in arrears to you,
Let us rectify the difference with some small token.

Credenza:
Nay nay, no matter how small the token t'would still be an unwelcome intrusion.
Share with me instead some information about yourselves.
(Pause, while Credenza searches for a question.) Are either of you betrothed?

Habanero:
Nay, but I was promised by my father to a cheese merchant.

Cubanelle:
But wait, brother, t'was I who Father promised to the cheese merchant. Remember?

Habanero: (looks at Cubanelle blankly for a moment).
Oh ... right. You see, the thought of the marriage has so disturbed my sister that as her twin I felt her pain as if t'were mine own.

Credenza: (reacts strongly)
A cheese merchant you say?!

Habanero:
Indeed, but my sister has never met him and fears his manner will not suit her temperament.

Credenza:
I see, then what might you ... er both you ... either of you really .... be looking for in mates?

Habanero:
My sister does not favor suitors who are thick-headed,
Windy mouthed fellows full of steam and premature ejaculations.
She favours suitors soft of tongue but firm of diction.
Cubanelle:
And my brother does not fancy limp minded ladies,
Who chase after him like hounds after a fox.
He prefers an experienced lady,
Who sits atop the seat of her wits
Rather than upon the wits of her seat.

(Credenza's annoyed and confused.)

Credenza:
Well that shouldn't be hard to remember!

Cubanelle:
We must now away to plot our dosage -

Habanero:
- as t'will take some planning.

(Habanero & Cubanelle exit.)

Credenza:
If the players and queer folk in this drama were
Ps and Qs in some jumbled type of script 'twould be easier
To keep them straight.

(Enter Lothargio.)

Lothargio:
Credenza,
Has thou learned what may curry
The Lady Cubanelle's favour?

Credenza: (none too surely)
Indeed my lord... she enjoys fellows ... full of steam and premature ejaculations?

Lothargio:
Ahoy!
I am just such a fellow as that!
My tongue can scarcely keep up with my wits on most days
And I'm proud to say it shows!
I must compose some kind of amusing doggerel suitable for loud saying.
Ha ha ha
(knuckles Credenza heartily on the arm and exits speaking.

Lothargio: (Offstage)
I mean to say Lady Cubanelle, if your (dirty) bodkins were bare I could bear it easily and bear mine also.
Ho ho ho ho. That's pure gold!

Credenza: (Stands agog and baffled).
Alas I know not what I said to trigger his lusty outburst ... in fact I know not what I said at all.

(Enter Rosacea.)
Rosacea:
Credenza! Hast thou discovered what heats up the spicy Habanero?

Credenza:
Indeed Lady,
He likes the company of women who pursue him hotly, like hounds after a fox.

Rosacea:
Excellent, for my methods are quick to spark and can hardly be called cool.

(Habanero & Cubanelle enter and confer together for a moment.)

Coriander:
Let us forebear from taking the love potion
Until we see whether these elder nobles stand up on second glance.

Cilantro:
Agreed!

Rosacea:
Senor Haba-haba-nero.

(Rosacea advances her arms open as before, embraces him then steps back and stretches her arms as if exhilarated and limbering up for more.)

Habanero: (Taken aback and at a loss.)
Lady! Row-row-row-thy boat gently!
Ha ha, ha ha.

(Habanero and Cubanelle exchange a look. Both are alarmed.)

Habanero: (Changing the subject.)
Er, tell me milady, hast thou ... travelled widely?

Rosacea:
Multiple times, brother.

(Presses herself on him.)

Rosacea:
I have given audience to many heads of state.

(She wraps one arm around him.)

Rosacea: (flicking her fan)
Aye and I am adept at wielding royal sceptres.

Habanero:
Forgive me Lady,
My sister is looking pasty and dry mouthed,
'Zif she inhaled some noxious weed.
Give me a moment with her.

(Habanero crosses to Cubanelle.)
Habanero:
I should rather be poked by a bare bodkin
Than endure another second of this one woman's army advances.

Cubanelle:
Had she a bodkin, its point would be out for sure.

Habanero:
What think you brother?
This morning she seemed as pleasant
And well mannered a lady as one might find.

Cubanelle:
But now tis as if her clock is ticking
And the shorter the hour becomes,
The more urgently the weight drops.

Habanero:
Does she still hold possibilities for you?

Cubanelle:
Let us give her one more chance.

Habanero:
Most fair Cubanelle.

Cubanelle:
Behold sister, tis the Lord Lothargio.

(Lothargio enters.)

Cubanelle:
Watch his behaviour towards me well
So that your own feelings for him may become clearer.

(Cubanelle goes over to him.)

Lothargio:
Lady Cubanelle,
Hast thou the heard the jest,
About the talking codpiece and the farting nun?

(Cubanelle looks at Habanero as if for instruction. Habanero urgently nods yes.)

Cubanelle:
Alas, I have already heard that one milord.

(Lothargio advances on her.)

Lothargio:
Aha. A lady of some refinement I see.

Cubanelle:
Indeed lord,
Besides this predilection for pungent poltroonery,
What are some other past times you enjoy?

Rosacea:
Making brainless comments at high volume is always a favourite.

(Lothargio, ignoring her, advances on Cubanelle.)

Lothargio:
I also take foolish joy in ear splitting,
Nonsensical witticisms signifying nothing.
Who could forget this classic:
"If a fool's dog were is his fool's master
Then the fool of the the master would be barking
At wooden nutmegs." Hahahahaha.

Cubanelle:
A meaningless chestnut indeed, lord.

Lothargio:
Finally, I have amassed a repertoire of highly audible funny stories
Like the time that I slept for 57 hours straight
And was so tired afterwards that I had to rest for 5 days in bed.
(Laughs congratulatorily.)

Cubanelle:
Forgive me lord,
But my brother looks slackjawed
As though some acid is eating away at him from within.
Just one moment.

(Cubanelle crosses to Habanero.)

Cubanelle:
I had rather be deafened by cannon fire
Than listen any longer to these windy broadsides.

Habanero:
Indeed I half expected some heavy projectile
To issue from his mouth at any moment.

Cubanelle:
Does he still hold your favour?

Habanero:
This morning he seemed a pleasantly roguish fellow.

Cubanelle:
But now he is a veritable Vesuvius of hot air and gas.

Habanero:
As with Lady Rosacea, let us give him one more chance.
Cubanelle:
Agreed sister,
But let us do so in our own guises.
I cannot bear any more of Lothargio's eruptions.

Habanero:
Agreed, brother.

Habanero:
Excuse us for one moment, noble nobles, we have some dressing ... er ... pressing business to discuss.

(They exit.)

Rosacea:
Credenza,
I have done just as you said and yet he finds me like oil unto his water.

Lothargio:
And Cubanelle looks at me askance, as though I have offended her every sensibility.

Credenza:
Alas, Lord and Lady,
You both did ask me to discover likes and dislikes.
And 'tis possible I ... er switched one for the other.

Rosacea:
Then remember them correctly and tell us again!

Credenza:
Could it be then that Cubanelle likes men with thick tongues and limp diction?

Lothargio:
Thick tongues?
(He sticks his tongue out tentatively. And speaks with it out til his exit.)

Lothargio:
Limp diction?

Rosacea:
Yes I should think that's about it.

Lothargio:
But I sound silly.

Rosacea:
But Lothargio, tis what the lady desires.

Lothargio:
This better be worth it!

Credenza:
And I believe Habanero enjoys soft-headed women who depend on their bottoms to keep them on top.
(Rosacea turns around and looks at her butt.)

Rosacea:
Look, I think my bottom is tops,
But I shudder to think of waving it around
At Habanero.

Lothargio:
But Rosacea, it's what he likes. (Laughs). Besides, I never maligned your bottom. I too considered it tops.

Rosacea (sticking her tongue out as well):
Thank you.

(Coriander and Cilantro enter, having changed hats to appear as themselves.)

Coriander:
Let us see what now transpires.

Lothargio:
Miss Cubanelle
I hasten to assure you
That my tongue is thick and my diction limp.

Coriander: Aha, indeed.

(Rosacea walks an odd sort of sideways crab walk toward Cilantro, so as to afford him a clear view of her now oddly thrust out bottom.)

Rosacea:
I hope you take notice of the excellent behind you see in front of you.

Cilantro:
Its quality is high, though its presentation is most unexpected.

Coriander:
Brother these two have gone mad!

Cilantro:
Forsooth sister, you speak the truth.

Lothargio:
Cubanelle, what think you of my thick tongue?

Coriander:
Alas, I have but so recently met you Lord,
That I fear I have had little time to ruminate on thy tongue.

Rosacea:
Habanero, how seems this venerable rump to you?

Cilantro:
Aye, fit for roasting – will thou pardon me for one instant.

(Cilantro & Coriander confer.)
Cilantro:
Sister, my rearward regard for this Lady has begun to sag with this cheeky affront.

Coriander:
And this lollygagging Lothargio has about worn out his welcome.

Cilantro:
Let us beat a none-too-subtle retreat.

Coriander:
Our apologies Lord and Lady, but we must away for some more convivial amusement in the village.

Cilantro:
See you at supper.

(They exit. Lothargio and Rosacea corner Credenza. Rosacea still walks with her butt outhrust and Lothargio's tongue still protrudes.)

Lothargio:
Credenza, you said they would like these... posturings.

Rosacea:
And now both they have fled!

Lothargio:
Yeah, they've fled.

Credenza:
To begin I think you might stop talking like that and that you, Lady Credenza, might make compact your so recently voluminous derriere. And next it would seem to me that the two of you ought to work together to do what you can to win them back.

Rosacea:
Your speech though rudely plain and at times plainly rude, has rude good sense to it.

Lothargio (to Rosacea):
Did your eyes fail you? Those two ran away from us like common sense from a copy clerk.

Rosacea:
My eyes did not fail me, and that is why we shall use their ears against their eyes.

(She exits.)

Lothargio:
I do not follow you.

Credenza:
Follow Rosacea, you'd be best to do,
If a future with Cubanelle is forewanted by you.

(Exit Lothargio after Rosacea and Credenza in opposite direction.)
Scene 7:

(The town square. Coriander & Cilantro enter dressed as themselves. Hidden nearby, Testicles sees all that transpires.)

Cilantro:
I am glad we are free from those clinging nobles.

Coriander:
Aye. This town's square is most pleasing.

Cilantro:
'Twas wisely done of you to put off our drinking of the potion.

Coriander:
Promenading through minstrels and jesters
Is a far cry more fun the jilted gabbering of those two.

(Lothargio & Credenza enter disguised and carrying a table with some props on it and use kazoos to trumpet their arrival.)

Rosacea:
Announcing the triumphant arrival of
The Earl of Gloucester's Players.

Cilantro:
What is thine act?

Rosacea:
We once were players to the Earl of Gloucester.

Lothargio:
Whose eyes had been put out.

Coriander:
His eyes put out? Who committed this barbarity upon him?

Rosacea:
Er... the Thane of Cawdor perhaps?

Lothargio:
I would have said Shylock or perhaps the Sheriff of Nottingham...
Rosacea (quickly):
Tis of no import,
Other than you to know
That our former patron had us create plays suited only to the ear.

Lothargio:
A theatre of the mind of sorts.

Rosacea:
And so we would atell you both
To close your eyes
The better to set the stage for our spectacle of sounds.

(To audience.)

Only these two though.
Those others of you in the crowd
Can close your eyes or watch our larks as you see fit.
Quickly, now that their eyes are closed
get those devices too crude for them to behold.

(Each runs off and returns with a microphone on a stand, setting one on either side of the table.)

Rosacea:
Our story begins on a windswept plain where a beleagured brother and sister, plod a blasted heath...er...blasted snowcap.

Lothargio;
Sister, I am so tired I can not go on.

Rosacea:
Neither can I brother. But what's that, there's a light in the distance. It's a fire.

(They start to run. Crackling of fire.)

Cilantro:
Forsooth sister, does not this tale remind you of our own plight?

Coriander:
Aside from
Our having been cast ashore
In sultry southern climes
Instead of a frigid arctic glacier,
I should say it does, brother.

Rosacea:
At the fire
Our two young travellers
Meet a Lord and his ex-lady,
Whose warm welcomes thaw their hearts.
Of the men in the piece, as follows:
The brother is taken with this new lady of his acquaintance.
After the catgut squeaking harpies so recently of his ken
Rosacea:
She seems a melody bright, steady and sweet.

Cilantro:
Oh yeah.

(Jew's Harp – "Boinnngggg")

Lothargio:
And the Lord already at the fire
Felt his interest in this girlish newcomer rising.

(Slide whistle up)
He saw before him a woman,
Curved and bright as a new kettle.

Coriander:
A new kettle?

Lothargio:
Er – in that he could imagine her slowly rising like steam in a kettle, simmering gently before coming to a
raging boil.

(bubbling builds to climax)
Rosacea:
But of the women more felt responses:
That lady already at the fire is consumed by a need
For equal companionship. Every night she hears
The legions of men with who she has spent a pleasant evening
Or a meaningful year, the echoes of their footsteps growing louder.
But as she looks on this new face,
She can hear them marching into the distant past.

(SFX Marching)
Lothargio:
And the sister,
So hotly pursued by popping pistols of late,
Sees this man so still and calm
And does feel her pulse quicken,
The way it does in a heavy rain.

(Heartbeat and rain FX)

Rain fades.

(Coriander sighs. She and Cilantro look pleased.)
Cilantro:
Those were fine times indeed.

Lothargio:
But through the incompetencies of a baffled menial,
Not represented herein,
There was a great misunderstanding
And all four corners of this triangle felt their hearts breaking.

(Nasty cracking.)

Coriander:
Zounds, players, was it their hearts or their bones that broke?

(Lothargio & Rosacea struggle to find a new effect.)

Rosacea:
Indeed it was their hearts fair auditors.

(Breaking of glass.)

(Cilantro & Coriander seem more affected by this and are quickly moved to tears.)

Cilantro:
Oh – that's it – thou hast got it now

Coriander:
Oh yes, that's definitely it – How sad, how sad for what might have been.

Rosacea:
But little did these heartbroken siblings know
That their former flames were just as heartbroken
And would have given anything to try once more.

Lothargio:
If you've enjoyed our programme and would like to book the Earl of Gloucester's Players for an upcoming function –

(Rosacea smacks him. And they start gathering up their stuff.)
(The twins applaud.)

Coriander:
Perhaps we have been o'er precipitous in our dismissal of these nobles.

Cilantro:
Indeed sister,
I now recall that my heart
Seemed ready to burst for joy
When first I set eyes upon the Fair Lady Rosacea.

(Lothargio & Rosacea scamper away with the table.)

Coriander:
Alas, brother
I remember thinking
That I had seen my future that day and it was Lothargio.

Testicles: (aside)
On that day? Twas only this morning!

Cilantro:
Sister, methinks the time for caution is past.
Let us return to the castle and ingest our love potions forthwith.

Coriander;
Well spoken brother.
We have nearly lost these fish once.
Let us not lose them again.

(They Exit.)

Testicles:
Indeed these nobles have shown unexpected sense
But my potions in wrong gullets will quickly make things tense.

Scene 8:
Lothargio's palace.

(Credenza sets the table. Lothargio and Rosacea enter.)

Lothargio:
Credenza,
Hast thou my love potion from Testicles?
The time for its taking is nigh.

Credenza:
I ... I ... aye aye Lord 'tis here.

(Gives it to him.)

Rosacea:
What is its function?

Lothargio:
It shall cause the one who drinks it
To fall in love with the first they behold.
Rosacea:
And you plan to use this on Cubanelle?

Lothargio:
Indeed, as her affections will be more easily grabbed.
I am willing to share it
Should you decide that Habanero
Is not as responsive as might he be.

Rosacea:
I appreciate the gesture,
But I should hope to capture Habanero's interest
With a snatch rather than a grab.

(Lothargio adds the potion to some nearby goblets.)

Credenza:
Oh, now is the splinter of our common sense.
I am nearly sure I have mixed up the potions.
Lothargio's now has that
Which will cause the the drinker to become
Irresistable to the first who sees him after its swallowing.

(Habanero & Cubanelle enter dressed as themselves and speak to each other in an aside. Each has a tiny vial of their potion.)

Habanero:
Let us position ourselves carefully
So that the first who sees us is the one we desire.

Cubanelle:
Agreed.

(Each positions them self on either side of the stage to be closer to Lothargio or Rosacea. Lothargio approaches Credenza with a tray laden with 4 cups.)

Lothargio:
Credenza,
These three cups are filled with ordinary wine,
But this fourth one's rim encircles an elixir, that
Testicles assured me was made
From the lusty flies of Spain.
It will cause the drinker
To become enamored
Of the first they set eyes upon
After its ingestion.
Make certain tis none but this one
That the lady Cubanelle imbibes.
In short, no other than none of these three.

(Credenza crosses toward Habanero.)

Credenza:
Even as I take these steps
I have confused which goblet
Promises the best rim.
Here goes.
Here Mistress Cubanelle,
Would you care for some wine from any goblet but this one?

Habanero:
Why not.

(Cubanelle drinks some wine from one of the three normal cups.)

Cubanelle:
T'was most excellent.
My thanks.
And now if you will excuse me,
I must administer my own chaser.

Credenza:
Chaser? Lothargio will be chasing her soon enough.

(She crosses to Habanero and gives him a glass and then to Rosacea who also takes a glass. Each knocks their glass back with no visible effect. Credenza returns to Lothargio.)

Lothargio:
Did Cubanelle drink from the right goblet?

Credenza:
As near as those not in the know might not know, lord.

Lothargio: (uncertainly)
Good.

(He takes the goblet as she walks away and starts to drink. As Credenza crosses, Testicles sticks his head around the corner and hisses at her.)

Testicles:
Credenza!

(Credenza starts and drops the tray with a crash. The twins turn and see each other. Rosacea turns and sees Lothargio. The twins are are frozen, eyeing each other with unhealthy interest. Rosacea is frozen in regard of Lothargio.)

Habanero:
Cubanelle, thy name has never seemed sweeter.

Cubanelle:
And Habanero has never seemed a hotter handle.

(They begin to stalk towards each other.)

Habanero:
But wait, we are siblings!

Cubanelle:
I know but this monstrous compulsion is overwhelming.

Testicles (from behind one of the flats):
I see the crucial dosing stage has not been properly done.

Credenza (to Testicles):
More to the point I think I have mixed the potions.

Testicles:
Then who has drunk the one that makes the drinker irresistible?

(Rosacea advances on Lothargio.)

Rosacea:
Lothargio, perhaps I have been too fast to dismiss your many delights.

Credenza (to Testicles):
It would seem that Lothargio has.

Lothargio: (backing away from Rosacea)
What unwelcome lechery is this?

Habanero:
Oh my organ of restraint is weakening by the second.

Cubanelle:
My organ is fit for a recital any minute.

Lothargio:
Rosacea, why art thou suddenly singling me out?

Rosacea:
I am singling you out the better to couple with you.

Lothargio:
But you despise my lethargy.
You once accused me of being an obstinate mule
Whose laziness would drive the farmer to pull the plow.

Rosacea: (seeing reason, but still unable to control herself)
Indeed I do, but even a farmer needs to make hay,
And this furrow is ready for plowing.

Cubanelle:
My loins are drawn to thine like a lodestone to the north star.

Habanero:
Tis a region more southerly that I would have the winds blow your lodestone to.

Cubanelle:
You have left the participle dangling.

Habanero:
Trust me brother, had I a participle 'twould not be dangling now.
Testicles (to audience):
Fortunately I have brought a freezing whistle.

(He blows the whistle and all the players freeze, except for Credenza and Testicles.)

Credenza:
Did you mix them love potions or lust potions?

Testicles:
Love, lust, cheddar, mozzarella. What's the difference?

Credenza:
Between cheddar and mozzarella? There's a world of difference.

Testicles:
Yes well, "C'est frommage," as the French say.
Now, I have brought along an ointment of newt sweat.
Smeared under their noses twill neutralize the effects of the potion.
Here, you can help.

(He hands her a small jar and a brush. They walk about and paint moustaches on the frozen actors.)

Testicles:
Then we simply ring the waking chime and all should be well.

(He rings a small triangle. The actors snap out of their freeze. The twins are still frozen in deadlock, but Rosacea knocks Lothargio to the ground and straddles him.)

Lothargio:
Rosacea, why'rt thou so suddenly a wanton rider,
When your previous posturing has been that of a carefully mounted lady?

(He rolls on top of her trying to get up.)

Rosacea:
Forsooth, I know not –
The appetites of my body have come unharnessed.

Lothargio:
Whoa then and quit your bridling for I should not make a willing groom.

(He turns his back on her as if ending the discussion.)

Rosacea:
Aye but I know thou'rt a fine stud
So 'gainst my better judgment make me your mount once more!

(She leaps on to his turned back.)

Lothargio:
Your position is not prone
To make that happen lady,
Now get off!
Rosacea:
I'm trying to get off!
Giddy up!

(She rides him off stage.)

Lothargio:
Look out, we're heading for the cornucopia!

(Off stage crash and a selection of fruits and vegetables roll on to the stage.)

Credenza:
I don't think it's working.

Testicles:
Seemingly not, no.

Credenza:
But what of the twins?

Cubanelle:
Ugh - these shameful feelings do not stop
My bugle from trumpeting his horny fanfare.

Habanero:
My triangle is chiming fit to bust.
And though I know the notes our instruments
Play to be false I cannot help but wish for a pounding symphony.

Testicles:
Quickly Credenza, what is the date?

Credenza:
I believe tis the fifteenth of May.

Testicles:
Fool that I am!
The label on the newt sweat bore a warning:
Best used before the Ides of May.

Credenza:
Well isn't that convenient!

(Lothargio enters still carrying Rosacea on his back. She wacks him with a cucumber.)

Rosacea:
Curse you Lothargio, what must I do to win your services?

Lothargio:
To begin with you might stop hitting me with that!

(Lothargio reaches back and grabs the cucumber.)
Rosacea:
Then I shall commence hitting thee with this.

(She produces a droopy stemmed gourd and starts whacking him with it. Suddenly Lothargio notices Cubanelle and Habanero.)

Lothargio:
Hit instead those two youngsters eyeing each other so lustfully.
Tis not proper and I shall not have it in mine house.
Besides, dost thou not remember how you pined for Habanero?

Rosacea:
Indeed I do and now that I see him ogling his sister this way,
I think I shall commence hitting you both.

(She grabs back the cucumber and attacks Habanero and Lothargio.)

Cubanelle:
I can control my self no longer.

(Cubanelle goes to kiss Habanero.)

Habanero:
No!

(Habanero turns away to be whacked by Rosacea. The scene disintegrates into a jumble of bodies.)

Testicles:
This calls for desperate measures.
Since the twins are enamoured of their disguised selves
We must break that spell by shedding their disguises.
Help me.

(Testicles and Credenza wade into the melee. Each manages to grab the hat of one twin toss it to the other and then plop the hats on their real heads. Rosacea and Lothargio freeze in shock with intakes of breath.)

Coriander:
Thank heavens the special effect is lost.

Cilantro:
My apologies sister.

Coriander:
Nay, mine brother.

Lothargio:
Gadzooks, these two have changed places before our very eyes.

Rosacea:
My lust for thee is waning with this fresh confusion.

(She slips off of his back.)
Lothargio:
You each have changed from one into the other.

Rosacea:
Is it some sort of magic?

Coriander:
Forsooth brother
I have never understood wherefore
All who look upon us see two.

Cilantro:
Agreed sister,
For though we be twins
I have yet to see this resemblance folks are taken with.

Coriander:
Indeed it has served us well so far, but now let us make our true identities known

Cilantro:
Know then lord and lady that though we two be twins real and true,
Our true selves are these:

Coriander:
I am Coriander,
Daughter to the Duke of Muscany.

Cilantro:
And I am his son,
Her twin brother, Cilantro.

Lothargio:
Great Caesar's Ghost!

Rosacea:
Shiver me timbers!

Coriander:
Forgive our deception.
We were on our way to my arranged marriage with the Cheese Merchant Asiago,
When our ship floundered and we survived.
But I have never met Asiago,
Therefore cannot love him
And have no wish to become Missus Asiago.

Cilantro:
We were afraid that should we reveal ourselves to you,
You would be bound to turn us in,
But know that our affections for you are real
And not merely part of our disguise.

Rosacea:
So it is you whose affection I hold?
Cilantro:
Indeed lady. And all I would ask is a chance to earn yours.

Rosacea:
Thy manner and appearance so much as before are forming a fair downpayment.
In return I would ask you to forgive if you are able,
My recent behaviours toward yourself and Lothargio.

Cilantro:
Able and willing lady.

Lothargio:
Are you are able to overlook my limp tongue and overbearing manner of before?

Coriander:
Ready to try, Lord, if can you appreciate that strange compulsion which was beyond our control.

Lothargio:
Twas beyond your control lady, but not beyond my understanding.
Alas, I might have saved you your troubles and my heartache by telling you that only yesterday we have received word that the cheese merchant Asiago has disappeared.

Credenza: (pulling off her hat / wig.)
That is because I am the cheese merchant Asiago.

Testicles:
I thought you were a woman of character!

Credenza:
No, I am actually a man in drag.
Good Coriander, I wanted our marriage no more than you.
My family put me up to it – I tried to hide from them largely in closets –
But I fled their attentions, rather than reveal
That my interest lies more with the farm hands than the dairy maids.

Testicles:
Means this that thou’rt a plain speaking man?

Credenza:
Yup.

Testicles:
‘Cause I’ve been looking for a plain speaking man.

Credenza:
And so have I.

Lothargio:
Then each of us has found an companion,
The better to while away these perfect evenings
And joyfully greet the new day together.

Testicles / Prologue:
This then shall be the tableau that ends our tale.
We hope the modest seed our humble masque has planted,
Will bloom into fantasy, nurturing your most pleasant dreams
And such stuff as they are made on.

(Fade to black.)